

NAME	Whistleblowing	VERSION NUMBER	1.0	PREPARED BY	SM
VALID FROM	01/09/26	APPROVED BY	SLT	REVIEW DATE	3 years
KEY CHANGES					

Whistleblowing Policy

1. Purpose:

This policy enables staff, volunteers, and others connected to the charity to raise concerns about wrongdoing, risk, or malpractice in a safe and responsible way.

It supports our commitment to openness, accountability, and integrity in all our work.

The aim is to ensure that concerns are dealt with promptly, fairly, and without fear of victimisation

What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing means raising a genuine concern about wrongdoing, risk or misconduct that affects or impacts the charity. It is about speaking up when if you believe something is happening that could harm:

- The people we work with or support
- Staff
- The charity’s reputation, funds or legal obligations
- The wider public interest

Examples could include:

- Someone committing fraud, theft, or misuse of charity funds
- Ignoring serious health and safety risks
- Discrimination, harassment, or abuse being covered up
- Breaches of data protection or confidentiality
- Actions that break the law or go against the charity’s values

If you raise a concern honestly and in good faith, even if you turn out to be mistaken, you are doing the right thing.

2. Scope:

This policy applies to all employees, trustees, contractors and any agency staff. It also applies to any service or charity users, stakeholders or external partners or companies or charities associated with Voice 21.

3. Definitions:

- **Whistleblowing:** The act of reporting concerns about malpractice, wrongdoing, or risks that affect others, rather than personal complaints.
- **Whistleblower:** A person who raises such a concern in good faith.
- **Malpractice:** Illegal, unethical, or improper conduct that threatens the charity’s integrity or the public interest.
- **Protected Disclosure:** A disclosure made in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which provides legal protection to whistleblowers.

NAME	Whistleblowing	VERSION NUMBER	1.0	PREPARED BY	SM
VALID FROM	01/09/26	APPROVED BY	SLT	REVIEW DATE	3 years
KEY CHANGES					

4. Process:

1/. **Raising a Concern:**

Concerns should be raised as soon as possible.

- Staff can raise them verbally or in writing to the Director of Operations. If your concerns are about or include the Director of Operations, you should raise your concerns with the CEO. If you feel unable to raise it internally, you can contact the Chair of Trustees directly by contacting the executive PA.
- Non staff can raise them by contacting us through the hello@Voice21.org clearly marking the subject line as Whistleblowing Contact for the attention of The Director of Operations or if you believe this member of staff is complicit, the CEO.

2/. **Acknowledgement and Initial Review**

We will acknowledge receipt within five working days. An initial review will determine whether further investigation is needed and who will lead it.

3/. **Investigation:**

Investigations will be handled promptly, fairly, and confidentially. The investigator (usually the Director of Operations or an external appointed legal consultant) will gather evidence, interview relevant parties and produce a report with findings and recommendations. Whistleblowers will be kept informed of progress where possible.

4/. **Outcome:**

The outcome will be shared with the whistleblower, where appropriate, while maintaining confidentiality. It will also be shared with the Chair of Trustees. If wrongdoing is found, we will take appropriate corrective or disciplinary action which may include referral/reporting to regulatory bodies e.g. Charities Commission, Companies house

5/. **External Reporting:**

If you believe your concern has not been properly addressed, you may report it to an external body such as the Charity Commission, HMRC, or the police. Independent advice is available from Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work): www.protect-advice.org.uk/

6/. **Protecting the Whistleblower**

Whistleblowers who raise concerns in good faith are protected by law (Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA)). They will not face dismissal, victimisation or any detrimental treatment. We will make every effort to keep disclosures confidential, although this may not be possible in all cases if a formal investigation is required, however the scope of the investigation and information sharing will always be limited to as few people as possible and a commitment to confidentiality will be required by all involved.

NAME	Whistleblowing	VERSION NUMBER	1.0	PREPARED BY	SM
VALID FROM	01/09/26	APPROVED BY	SLT	REVIEW DATE	3 years
KEY CHANGES					

5. Roles & Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of the Head of People & Culture that all employees are aware of this policy and that it is accessible to all.

It is the responsibility of the Director of Operations that this policy is accessible to members of the public via our website.

The Director of Operations is responsible for managing any process unless the concern is about or includes them. In this case, the CEO is responsible for this process.

6. Compliance & EDI:

Voice 21 is committed to and upholds equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). This is reflected in this policy:

- We are committed to ensuring this policy is applied fairly and equitably.
- Whistleblowing procedures must be accessible to everyone, regardless of background, role, or personal circumstances.
- We will provide support and reasonable adjustments for anyone who may face barriers in raising a concern.

8. Monitoring and Review:

The policy is comprehensively reviewed every three (3) years, unless any new legislation in this period requires us to update it.